



Statement of Senator Feinstein on Voting for General Michael Hayden as Director of the CIA

May 23, 2006

“I voted today in the Senate Intelligence Committee to confirm General Michael Hayden as Director of the CIA. I cast this vote first and foremost because General Hayden is a skilled, experienced intelligence professional whom I respect and trust.

Since September 11, 2001, the CIA has been an Agency in turmoil. Following its failure, along with other intelligence agencies, to prevent the attacks of 9/11, the CIA was dead wrong in its assessments of Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction. The pace of operations in the war on terror has challenged the Agency’s workforce. The departure of perhaps two dozen senior officials from the Directorate of Operations in the past two years will cause irreparable harm to the Agency’s leadership.

I believe General Hayden is the leader and honest broker the CIA needs to regain its footing as the world’s premier spy service and the hub of our nation’s intelligence analysis and research and development capabilities. His commitment to place intelligence professionals in the major executive positions, unlike his predecessor, is important to me, and will be welcomed by the CIA workforce.

General Hayden’s vision for the CIA is, I believe, the right one. He has pledged to push the envelope in collecting human intelligence – a risky but necessary move to understand our enemies and the threats we face. At the same time, Hayden understands the failures of analysis prior to the Iraq War and is committed to demanding improvements.

Before my meeting with General Hayden and his appearance at the confirmation hearings, I was concerned that he will not be sufficiently independent of the Department of Defense. On this point, I have been reassured. General Hayden has shown his independence in the past and I am confident that he will continue to do so. I hope that if General Hayden finds that his uniform gets in the way of his ability to lead the CIA, he will take it off.

I was disappointed that General Hayden was not more forthcoming in the open confirmation hearing on the NSA warrantless domestic surveillance program and on his own views on detention, interrogation and rendition policies. The American people are appropriately concerned about both issues and deserved more forthcoming answers. I felt that General Hayden should have stated clearly, in full public view, whether he believes that certain interrogation techniques constitute torture.”